

San Ardo Union Elementary School District



March 20, 2002

Honorable Robert O'Farrell
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
Grand Jury - County of Monterey

Dear Judge O'Farrell:

RE: RESPONSE TO THE 2001 MONTEREY COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY

The purpose of this letter is to respond to the Final Report of the 2001 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury regarding the training of school board members.

I have assumed my administrative responsibilities as superintendent of the San Ardo Union School District on December 10, 2001. I do not believe the grand jury has contacted the San Ardo Union School District to obtain information regarding the training of board members. There is, however, evidence that the San Ardo Union School District believes strongly in the training of board members. Moreover, the San Ardo Union School District funds and coordinates such trainings.

Finding #1: Not all school boards in Monterey County budget for or take advantage of available school board training.

District Response: This finding is not consistent with past practice of this district.

It is true that the district does not specifically budget money for board trainings, but the district does set funding aside for professional growth and development. This money is not only allocated for certificated and classified staff training, but has also been used to provide the board with training via outside consultants.

The San Ardo Union School District Board of Trustees is consistently provided information regarding current legislative and legal action. They also receive periodicals from the California School Board Association, updates from the staff and superintendent, attendance and participation in board committees, and trainings sponsored by educational consultants and organizations.

During my short time as superintendent, it is obvious that this board has taken advantage of and will continue to take advantage of trainings that support the educational philosophy and interest of the district and its constituents.

Finding #2: School boards have ultimate responsibility for school district resources and personnel, including the superintendent.

District's Response: The district agrees with this finding.

Recommendation #1: Provide a budget for school board training.

District's Response: The district will continue to budget for professional development, including the training required for board members.

The San Ardo Union School District will continue to make certain that funding is set aside for staff development. All board training expenses will fall under this category. This budget structure will enable board members to continue to receive training as needed.

Recommendation #2: Provide address to training, at a minimum in the following areas: parliamentary procedure, Ralph M. Brown Act, budget management, team building, cooperative boardsmanship, California Education Code and new legislation.

District's Response: This recommendation has been implemented.

The board takes advantage of many opportunities that arise during normal procedures that occur at monthly board meetings. For example, I recently made available to the board a revised, second edition of the Brown Act Guide. This document, in matrix format, is designed to allow the Board, superintendent and staff to quickly reference material as it pertains to the Brown Act. The booklet is not a substitute for legal counsel, nor does it provide legal opinion. It is a simple but comprehensive translation of the Government Code sections pertaining to the Brown Act.

Recommendation #3: Work with Monterey County Office of Education to develop school board training.

District's response: This recommendation has been implemented.

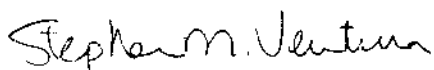
The Monterey County Office of Education provides opportunities for board members to receive training, and the San Ardo Union School District will continue to take advantage of these opportunities. New board members in particular attend the training services provided by the County.

Recommendation #4: Attend as many California School Board Association workshops as determined necessary.

District's Response: The district will continue to provide trainings to the board using several different opportunities.

The San Ardo Union School District Board of Trustees attend workshops provided by the CSBA, in addition to trainings provided by outside consultants, Small School District Association, and the Association of California School Administrators. It has been demonstrated that the board makes use of many training opportunities and expresses interest in attending conferences that best represent the learning community of San Ardo.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen M. Ventura".

Stephen M. Ventura
Superintendent

C: Dr.. William Barr, County Superintendent of Schools
Board of Trustees for the San Ardo Union School District

GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT TITLED SCHOOL BOARD TRAINING
 RESPONSE TO FINDINGS by SAN ARDO UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
 [as required by Section 933.05(a) California Penal Code] (Agency)

Finding #	Check One §933.05(a) (1)	(2)	Specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and include an explanation of the reasons therefor.
From Grand Jury Final Report	The respondent agrees with the Findings	The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with Finding: see next column	CONTINUE ON ATTACHED SHEETS AS NECESSARY
1		X	PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION
2	X		PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION

GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT TITLED SCHOOL BOARD TRAINING
RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS by SAN ARDO UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
[as required by Section 933.05(b) California Penal Code] (Agency)

Rec. #	Check One §933.05(b)				Time frame, explanation, summary (attached), etc.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	
From Grand Jury Final Report	Has been implemented, include summary of action	Will be implemented, include time frame	Requires further analysis, include time frame	Will not be implemented, include explanation	CONTINUE ON ATTACHED SHEETS AS NECESSARY
1				X	PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION
2	X				PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION
3	X				PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION
4	X				PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENTATION